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# PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

## MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

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### OCTOBER MEETING, 1916.

THE stated meeting was held on Thursday, the 19th instant, at three o'clock, P. M., the regular day having been a holiday; the PRESIDENT, Mr. LODGE, in the chair.

The record of the last meeting was read and approved; and the Corresponding Secretary, in the absence of the Librarian, reported the list of donors to the Library since the last meeting.

The Recording Secretary, in the absence of the Cabinet-Keeper, reported the following gifts:

From R. C. and N. M. Vose, a photograph of a portrait of Jonathan Amory, of Boston, in their possession.

From Frank W. Grinnell, a framed lithographic view of Baltimore in 1752, drawn by J. Backman, and copyrighted in 1856 by John W. Medairy.

From Grenville H. Norcross, two photographs of Madison Avenue, New York, at 40th Street, in March, 1888.

From T. Hassall Brown, of Boston, a photograph of a portrait of Col. Joseph Jackson, by Badger.

From Mrs. Arthur M. Crain, of Cranston, Illinois, an oil portrait of Daniel Brown Widdifield (1800-1862), of Boston, by William H. Beard.

From the estate of Mrs. Eugene F. Fay, an old-fashioned tinder-box, and an instrument used for splitting straw for braiding.

From the estate of Miss Martha Curtis Stevenson, through Mr. Lawrence Curtis, a silver badge worn by her as a member of the United States Sanitary Commission during the Civil War.

From the Misses Frances Greely and Annie Brace Stevenson, a silver Harvard medal with the inscription: "Fide et Amicitia K. P. S.

1809," which was given to their father, the late Dr. Jonathan Greely Stevenson.

From Mr. Foster, a collection of forty-eight medals and twenty-one jetons, including twenty-six of European celebrities, and interesting medals of the Society of the Cincinnati, and Sons of the Revolution.

From C. P. Greenough, a silver medal of the Harvard Natural History Society given to him by that society.

From the Law School of Harvard University, at the request of Judge Julian Mack, of Chicago, the bronze Ames Prize medal of the school.

From Louis Francis Brown, of New York, the bronze medal of the New York City Tercentenary Shakespeare celebration of 1916.

From Nathaniel T. Kidder, of Milton, a set of four Centennial medals, 1876.

From Waldo B. Fay, the new Fay School medal, Southboro.

From the Calumet and Hecla Mining Company, the silver Shaw-  
Agassiz medal struck to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Calumet and Hecla Mine.

From Mrs. Kingsmill Marrs, the bronze centenary medal of the Church Missionary Society, 1899.

From Francis H. Manning, the silver medal awarded to John Heard Manning by Dummer Academy, Byfield, August, 1827.

From Mr. Bowditch, the medal of the Paris Exposition by Cou-  
dray — the Orpheus medal.

By purchase, thirty-seven medals and store-cards.

From Frederick J. Ranlett, a photograph of a panel in the Rev. Isaac Braman house at Georgetown, Mass., bearing a list of students of Harvard College rusticated there from 1801 to 1818.

In this connection is printed a letter from Mr. Ranlett:

July 5th, 1916.

MY DEAR MR. FORD, — I believe you were interested in the old panel from the Rev. Isaac Braman house in Georgetown, so I am sending you a photograph of it. I call it, "A Register of the Rusticated."

You will notice that the first signature is that of James Savage. Perhaps the academic frailty of your former President may now, without impropriety, be drawn from its "dread abode."

The fourth name is that of Capt. Abraham Fuller Hull, who fell at the battle of Lundy's Lane; and there are other names of some distinction.

The facetious certificate at the bottom, signed "C.D.," is probably by Cuffey Dole, an African man-servant who is said to have ruled the Braman household with a high hand.

In reading Edmund Quincy's charming old-fashioned story of rustication, I fancy I detect a striking similarity in many respects between the Rev. Adrian Bulkeley and Mr. Braman, and between Jasper and Cuffey. Mr. Bulkeley must have "reigned," to use his own word, about fifty years. Mr. Braman was Pastor for fifty years and Pastor Emeritus for ten years more. Both passed safely from Arminian tendencies to the firm ground of Calvinism! The old darkies, too, match finely, two good Dromios — masterful spirits both, and both of ebon blackness. The geography of the story is, thinly disguised, that of Essex County; thus the title "Wensley" is Wenham and Rowley rolled into one, or, if you prefer, it is New Rowley, (the old name of Georgetown), with the "New" transposed. The "s" is inserted, of course, for euphony. Moreover, Wensley is about twenty miles from Boston; so is Georgetown. Thus all roads lead to Mr. Braman's parsonage. Was Quincy, too, one of the rusticated?

Notices of Mr. Braman may be found in Hurd's *History of Essex County*, I. 827, 859 (with his portrait); and in Palmer's *Necrology of Alumni of Harvard College*, 214. See also the "Funeral Discourse" by Rev. David T. Kimball. For Cuffey's romantic history, see Hurd, I. 815.

Both master and man are buried in the Union Cemetery, Georgetown: the parson has his marble pulpit with an open Bible on it, and Cuffey has a neat slate tablet with its urn and weeping willow — all in the best mortuary sculpture of the time.

Very sincerely yours,  
FRED'K J. RANLETT.

The Corresponding Secretary reported the receipt of a letter from Mr. J. K. Moffett of San Francisco, inquiring as to the origin of the Latin motto in the arms of the Commonwealth.<sup>1</sup>

The Editor reported the following gifts and purchases:

From the heirs of Jacob Rowe, through Mrs. Anna Rowe Cunningham, of Milton, the manuscript diaries of John Rowe (1715-1787), a merchant of Boston and a leader in the transactions of the merchants of Massachusetts in the troubled politics of the stamp-act and revolutionary periods. With some omissions, these diaries ex-

<sup>1</sup> See I *Proceedings*, VIII. 298.

tend from 1764 to 1779, an invaluable record of the times. They were used in part in the volume *Letters and Diary of John Rowe*, issued by Mrs. Cunningham in 1903.

From the estate of Mrs. Eugene F. Fay, of Brookline, lottery tickets, sold in Providence, R. I., in 1825 and 1826, a survey made in 1750 by Washington, two papers signed by W. Fairfax and G. W. Fairfax respectively, and other land warrants and documents.

From Lincoln N. Kinnicutt, of Worcester, a framed document, dated April 15, 1669, being an accusation against John Manning by Hagar Blackmore, with signatures of his bondsmen — Edward Oakes and Peter Towne — and of Daniel Gookin and Thomas Danforth.

From Frank W. Sprague, some papers of Leavit Sprague, of Hingham, among which are a copy by Hosea Sprague of a manuscript of Peter Hobart, of Hingham, containing David Hobart's book of records beginning 1635, and later entries; and the following contemporary issues of ballads on the war of 1812, from the press of Nathaniel Coverly, Jr.:

Brilliant Naval Victory. Yankee Perry better than old English cider. Tune — Three Yankee Pigeons.

Battle of Plattsburg. Tune — Battle of the Kegs.

Capture of Little York: or Dearborn victorious in Canada.

Peace on Honorable Terms to America [Treaty of Ghent.]

Unparalleled Victory. [Battle of New Orleans.]

Capture of Washington.

Liberty and Peace.

A Happy New-Year to Commodore Rogers, or Huzza for the *President* and *Congress* [December, 1812.]

Peace! Peace!

Pat's Observations on Harrison's Victory.

Offset for the Chesapeake, or the capture of Fort George, and repulse of the Enemy from Sacket's Harbor.

From Miss Annette P. Rogers, an interesting ms. plan of South Boston, made in 1804.

By purchase, some 2500 documents and letters relating to Massachusetts, and covering the period 1649 to 1840.

Papers of William Eustis (1753-1825), being a diary notebook, 1816-1817, and letters from General W. North, Christopher Gore, H. S. Langdon, W. Hull and others.

The PRESIDENT then said:

The chair announces the death, on June 28, 1916, of Thomas Russell Sullivan at his home in Boston. Mr. Sullivan was

elected a member of the Society on April 13, 1916, but his health suddenly gave way and he was never present at a meeting. He had accepted his election, however, and the fact that he had been chosen a member of the Society gave him very great pleasure. In the work of the Society and in the Society itself, by taste as well as by inheritance, he was deeply interested, and, had his life been spared, he would have been an active and diligent member. I cannot content myself in this case with the customary formal announcement of a member's death. I must add a personal word, for Russell Sullivan was one of my best as he was one of my oldest friends. I cannot recall a time when I did not know him, and his companionship is entwined with all my earliest memories as it is with those of the succeeding years down to the final parting. There was a period of separation in our youth, when his connection with the banking house of Bowles Brothers took him to Paris; but separation thus compelled made no change in the friendship begun in childhood, and after he retired from business and devoted himself to literary work the old and constant association was renewed, never again to be broken by prolonged absence. He achieved a large success in literature as the author of some of the best short stories which have appeared in our time, of several novels and of various successful plays, of which the dramatization of Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* for Richard Mansfield was, perhaps, the most widely known. One of his last publications was a most attractive book about Boston, the Boston of his boyhood and youth, warm with affection and touched with the imagination and humor so characteristic of his best work. But the uppermost thought in my mind as I speak of him to-day is not of his achievement or his success, but of the friend whom I have lost. There never was a man with a greater gift for friendship, for he was of a most loyal and affectionate nature. He was a most delightful companion, sympathetic in a high degree, with an abundant and rejoicing sense of humor as well as great personal charm. A lover of art in all forms, endowed with remarkable powers of observation, he had travelled widely and knew cities and men. He was well and deeply read in many literatures, old and new, and master of several modern languages, with a keen and unfailing interest not only in his own subjects, his own

pursuits and occupations, but in those of his friends, in public events and in the life of his time.

A devout lover of the greatest of poets and dramatists, he cannot be described better than in Shakespeare's words:

The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,  
The best condition'd and unwearied spirit  
In doing courtesies;

Such indeed he was to me and to all whom he honored with his confidence and his friendship.

Mr. WENDELL spoke as follows:

When Russell Sullivan was elected to this Society last April, I took the news to him straight from the meeting. He had been ill, though one did not realize how critical his condition was. He received me in his library with that beaming smile which all who knew him love to remember. We had a few words about his gladness for the honor the Society had done him, and how happily he looked forward to attending our meetings. So ended a friendship cloudless and strengthening through more than forty years.

It was in the summer of 1875 that I saw him first. He had lately returned from his years in France; he was playing in some French theatricals. I remember no other friend who has changed so little to the eye. His placid smoothness of feature and his conspicuously heavy moustache gave him an individuality hard to disguise; and, fond as he was of acting, and skilful in rendering character in all manner of theatricals, he always looked himself. Once you had seen him, you never forgot him.

Quite how we came into real friendship I cannot remember in detail. Both of us were among the younger men who once hoped to carry on in Boston the tradition of our New England literature, yet were somehow of a time so different from that which was passing as to make fully sympathetic relations with the older generation impossible on either side. We younger men, too, were never so much at one as the more eminent and more deeply indigenous men of letters who made Boston remarkable in the mid-nineteenth century; we were more critically disposed, more alertly aware of standards other

than those of our own country and less given to such mutual admiration as Holmes classically described in the *Autocrat*. Still, some of us came to be life-long friends; and Russell Sullivan was the life-long friend of us all.

In his friendship, as I remember it now, there was one quality deeply characteristic. Friendship cannot be friendship without full confidence; and no one could ever inspire more unshrinking confidence than he. There was never about him, either, the slightest trace of suspicion, of reticence, of prudent reserve. He thought for himself, and said what he thought, about all manner of men and things. Yet, as one stops to think, one is surprised to find how little he spoke, and how little he seemed to think, about himself. Without secretiveness, he was never confidential. His thoughts were ours, and the loyal heart of him, too; but his circumstances were his own.

They were sometimes more troublous, I think, and certainly more anxious than most of us imagined. He had a long period of something like poverty; his health was often not so strong as it seemed. More troublous still, however, one can begin to see now, he probably found the circumstances of his artistic life — the phase of his life which he cared most about. Unless I am all at fault, there has never been in New England anybody who more fervently cherished the deep artistic faith that those who attempt to make anything ought never to swerve from the ideal of beauty. It is in the power of any artist to leave this world a little more beautiful than he found it. Thus a passing life can most surely make for the happiness of lives about it and of lives to come. Sullivan was not a prolific writer, and never came to write swiftly or with unconscious ease. There was never a moment, though, in his whole literary career, when he faltered in effort to do what he was doing as beautifully as it could be done. Quite such fortitude of artistic conscience, among his artistic surroundings, was almost unique. So, again and again, there must have come to him a sense of solitude. A heart less stout than his might well have found it benumbing.

As one remembers him now, nevertheless, solitude is the last thing which comes to mind. What one thinks of is rather the boundless generosity of his artistic friendship. If any of us did anything which he thought well done, he was



the first to tell us so; and to tell us in a way all his own. He was free from morbid consciousness of self, with all its instinctive jealousies. To him a thing of beauty, great or small, was a joy forever, whoever made it. The world would be the happier for it; that was enough. He never dreamed of asking whether it was the work of someone else or his own; and he never failed to welcome anything, however slight, which should make for happiness.

So now it seems, as I think of our meetings through more than forty years, that there was never one of them that one could wish a bit other than it was. Hardly any except that very last stays sharply distinct in memory; but the memory of all, as they fuse together, is tenderly harmonious. There is about this memory, too, a growing certainty that as the years passed when his generosity of spirit and his simplicity of heart made others happier, his own happiness grew firmer, deeper, more serene, even to the end. There can be no doubt that, even though fate has prevented him from ever meeting with us here, the recognition which his election to this Society implied made his last day brighter. So in commemorating him to-day, we may be gladly sure that an act of ours gave a crowning pleasure to a man of beautifully gentle and happy memory.

Mr. GRANT read as follows:

My friendship with Russell Sullivan began in the late seventies. He was some two years my senior and we had known each other slightly as boys; but it was not until after his return from Europe in 1873 that we saw much of each other. He was already a member of the Papyrus Club when I joined it, about 1880, and the similarity of our tastes soon made us intimate. At the monthly meetings of the Papyrus the literary fledglings of that day — would-be poets and novelists — were wont to try their wings, presided over by the picturesque and warm-hearted John Boyle O'Reilly, already himself an eagle, who crystallized the spirit of our gatherings in his fervent poem, "I would rather live in Bohemia than in any other land."

Sullivan had been fitted for Harvard, but circumstances obliged him to renounce his plan of going to college. From 1866 to 1870 he was employed on State Street. In 1870 he entered

the service of a banking firm with offices in London and Paris. In one or the other of these cities he lived during the next three years, which later served him as a literary background, for he had a gift for languages, an accurate and retentive memory and a habit of recording interesting experiences or conversations. He returned to Boston in 1873 with the intention of becoming a man of letters, notwithstanding that his days were mortgaged to the Union Safe Deposit Vaults. From 1873 to 1888 he followed business by day and letters by night, and although he rarely wrote a line until after his routine labors were over, he produced during these years a notable amount of work. His original ambition was to be a dramatist, and from 1876 to 1880 he prepared a number of adaptations from the French for the Boston Museum. His adaptation of Labiche's *Le Voyage de Monsieur Perrichon* gave William Warren the excellent part of Papa Perrichon, which was also played through the country for a season by William H. Crane. In 1886, with the permission of Robert Louis Stevenson, he dramatized *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* for Richard Mansfield, one of that actor's most striking and profitable successes. In 1891 he wrote for Mansfield the tragedy *Nero*, which, although he declared himself under obligations to an Italian play on the same subject, was virtually original.

A few days after Warren's retirement from the Museum, following the retention by the management of the lion's portion of two benefit performances, all Sullivan's manuscripts were sent home to him without a word, and his connection with the theatre thus broken abruptly was never resumed. "But for this," he writes in his diary, "it is possible that I should always have been a dramatist or at any rate chiefly known to the public by my work for the stage." But he had already at the suggestion of James R. Osgood, who was on the lookout for rising talent (I remember recklessly selling three novels *short* to him at about the same time myself), started on his first novel, *Roses of Shadow*. This was published in 1885 by the Scribners, Mr. Osgood having failed just before it was finished, and in 1888 Sullivan decided to burn his bridges, or, in other words, to go out of business and devote all his time to literary work. Simultaneously with this decision he began the series of tales, which, after their appearance in *Scribner's Magazine*,

were published in 1890 under the title of *Day and Night Stories*. A second series with the same title followed in 1893. Both these collections found many admirers among cultivated and discriminating readers. They seem to me Sullivan's most distinctive work, although there is much literary quality in his novel, *The Courage of Conviction*, which appeared in 1902. The dialogue quoted on the title page of the first series, "O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!" "And therefore as a stranger give it welcome," is germane to the contents. Most of these stories deal with occurrences which savor of the weird and mysterious, yet are so skilfully constructed as to leave the reader free to choose, according to his temperament, between strange coincidence and the supernatural. The setting of all of them is so charmingly finished that they seem a series of little pictures, whether the scene be European, which it was apt to be, as in *The Lost Rembrandt* and *The Anatomist of the Heart*, or native, as in *Out of New England Granite*. They are nearly all in a minor key, almost melancholy in tone, with a sigh, as it were, for a vanished past of color, costume, ceremony and magic. Sullivan was a laborious writer. Five hundred words was a large day's work for him. He would have been the first to say that his audience was a small one; but his instincts and his workmanship were those of the true artist. A magazine editor, himself a scholar, referring to one of his contributions, writes, "I don't know in any of your stories a better example of just the quality which makes me value them so much — an indefinable quality, which is not half expressed by an overworked word 'limpidity,' but which certainly comes from a very remarkable unforcedness and self-possession in the style which helps the strength even of the strongest material. Holmes says a man can be a gentleman even in his prayers. It seems to me he certainly can be even when he conveys the strongest emotion — at all events the strongest emotion of other men who think and see as he does."

This is not the occasion to speak of his writings in more detail. One of his last books, published in 1912, was in the field of historical reminiscence, *Boston New and Old*, a sumptuous little volume with illustrations by Hornby.

Sullivan had a most engaging personality. He was essentially

a gentleman in his tastes and conduct of life, singularly loyal and generous in his impulses, highly sensitive, but ever sympathetic and cheerful in his relations with others, whatever his own anxieties. In 1893 his left eye became clouded and the use of either eye was forbidden him for a year. When he was allowed to resume work, the sight of the affected eye was virtually gone. Yet he never complained, and those who knew him as an assiduous worker forgot that for more than twenty years he was half blind. The stage was his first love, but he took an enthusiastic interest in all that appertained to art and letters. The verses that he wrote for social occasions were graceful and spirited and he never refused a request to figure in private theatricals. His tastes brought him in contact with many celebrities, with some of whom he became intimate — including William Warren, the actor, whom he adored, and Salvini, of whom he was a veritable hero worshipper and with whom he corresponded regularly for more than thirty years. In the last year of his life he had arranged to have Salvini's letters to him printed, and the publication has been only temporarily delayed.

During nearly ten years, starting from 1890, Sullivan kept a journal which contains in addition to much of a private nature a graphic and entertaining series of notes bearing on the interesting personages he met and the important occasions on which he was present. It is probable that they will be privately printed.

Professor BASSETT read a paper on "Peter Force and the American Archives," based upon a chapter in his volume on the *Middle Group of American Historians*.

By the courtesy of Miss Sara Norton the EDITOR is permitted to print the following:

LETTERS OF JOHN STUART MILL TO CHARLES ELIOT NORTON.

AVIGNON, Nov. 24, 1865.

DEAR SIR, — I have had the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 30th ulto. It is needless to send me the *North American Review*, as I am already a subscriber to it; but I am always glad to hear from any of the writers and to be enabled to identify an article with its author. The essay on American Political Ideas I had read the day before I received your letter. There is a good cause why

the Americans are more attached than the people of other countries to the principles of their Constitution; it is because their Constitution has principles. The British Constitution has no principles: it is the unpremeditated and unplanned result of a secular conflict of opposing forces. There are however, principles, not laid down in words, but involved both in the English and in the American institutions, viz., personal freedom; liberty of thought and publication; and, in America, perfect civil equality between one person and another. To these principles the people of each country are strongly attached, but in neither are they thoroughly carried out, though by you far more nearly so than by us. I hope you are going to carry the last of them into effect as between white people and black; after which it will still remain to bring it into operation between men and women.

I have great pleasure in subscribing to every word of the practical exhortations in your concluding paragraphs. Society in the Southern States has to be democratized in law and in fact, on the principles of the Declaration of Independence otherwise the sufferings and sacrifices of these glorious years will be more than half lost. And this will be easily done if the people of the Northern States do but will it. The opinions, feelings, and entire civilization of the North have made a wonderful stride since the war began. If they are not yet quite up to the final mark, who can blame them? May they reach it before anything irrevocable has been done in restoring the rebel States to their constitutional rights. I am, Dear Sir, Yours very sincerely,

J. S. MILL.

My address is Blackheath Park, Kent, from whence, in my absence, letters are forwarded.

BLACKHEATH PARK, KENT, March 18, 1868.

DEAR SIR, — It is a worthy act on the part of the New England Loyal Publication Society, to resume its operations for the purpose of contending against the deplorable doctrines now afloat in the United States about currency and the obligation of contracts. A breach of faith with the national creditor by the people of the United States, under whatever disguise, would be, in my estimation, the most unfortunate event for the morality of the world, and for the reputation and progress of free institutions, which at the present time could possibly happen; and of all modes of defrauding the public creditor, that of cancelling the debt by handing over to him a vast quantity of paper depreciated to worthlessness by excessive issue, would be, in its practical operation, the worst. If, as you do

me the honour of thinking, anything that I could write on the subject could in the smallest degree aid your exertions to ward off this calamity from your country and from mankind, I should feel bound in duty to do what little I can for the purpose. Unfortunately, it is impossible for me to write anything requiring care and concentration of thought during the session of Parliament. But to the extent of a letter, or a short article adapted for a newspaper, I could promise: and if you would kindly let me know the form and mode of publication which you would prefer I will do my best to meet your wishes. I am, Dear Sir, very sincerely yours,

J. S. MILL.

AVIGNON, Sept. 11, 1868.

DEAR SIR, — I regret that your arrival in England should have taken place just after I had left for the Continent with no prospect of returning until the eve of the general election. Should you still be in the neighbourhood of London at that time, I hope I may have the pleasure of seeing and conversing with you.

The changes in the opinions and feelings of large bodies of Englishmen and Englishwomen even within the last few years, are as striking to me as they are to you. The old fetters of prejudice and routine seem to be giving way, on all sides, and what is wanted now is clear and well considered positive opinions. All the great subjects, political, social, and religious, are brought into question; and there is a preparation going on in England, as there is in the United States, for a much better settlement of them than the world has yet had: but, naturally, the evidences of this are not so obvious on the surface as are those of the breaking up of old doctrines.

You probably think that I have forgotten my promise to write a letter on the Repudiation question, for publication in America. I have always kept it in mind; but as long as the session lasted, I never found time, nor was able to turn my mind to the subject with sufficient steadiness. Since I have been here, I have written the draft of a letter which now only requires revision, and when it is finished I will forward it to you, to be made use of in any manner which in your judgment it may be fitted for. Will you kindly let me know if it should be sent to your present, or to what other, address? I am, Dear Sir, very truly yours,

J. S. MILL.

AVIGNON, Sept. 24, 1868.

DEAR SIR, — Along with this I send you the letter which I have written for publication. I have, on consideration, thought it best

not to address it to an American newspaper, which would be too like arrogating to myself the right of lecturing the American people. I have given it the form of an answer to a private friend who has asked my opinion on the question. If you will honour me so far as to *be* that private friend, please fill up the blank at the beginning with your own name. In any other case, three stars must stand for a name.

Should there be any mistake of fact, or anything that seems to you injudicious or otherwise objectionable in the letter, you would do me a favour by pointing it out. It is unnecessary in that case to send the letter back, as I have kept a copy.

There is no doubt that the feeling of the mass of the working classes in England is very much alienated from the propertied classes. They are very strongly imbued with a sense of the opposition of interest between the receivers of wages and the payers of them. But I do not think that this feeling has reached the point of personal hatred between classes. I think that the operatives have confidence in the good will towards them of many persons in the higher and middle ranks, and that experience has taught them to expect that the others will be brought round gradually by the joint influence of conviction, persuasion, and prudence. The intelligent, who are the politically active part of the working classes, are not impatient; they have a sincere dread of the mass of brutal ignorance behind them, and have consequently set themselves to demand very vigorously a real national education. This they will soon obtain, and it will alter, in an incalculable degree, all the bad elements of the existing state of things. Already the aspirations of the workmen to the improvement of their physical condition, are pointing not so much to anything to be done directly by the State, as to what they can do for themselves, by co-operation. Revolution and civil war will not come from their side of the question; for, when their minds are sufficiently made up, the existing political institutions are sufficient to carry into execution their will. The political enfranchisement of women, whenever it takes place, will further strengthen the influences opposed to violence and bloodshed. The only question which may possibly become dangerous is that of the land. There are signs of a rapidly growing conviction in the operative classes that the land ought not to be private property, but should belong to the State. This opinion, which has always seemed to me fundamentally just, may perhaps come to maturity before the landholding classes are prepared even to listen to it; and in that case there will be bad blood and violent class animosities: but even then, as far as I am able to anticipate the future, it seems to me that the probabilities are in favour of the settlement of the question by a suc-

cession of compromises, without coming to blows. I am, Dear Sir,  
very sincerely yours,

J. S. MILL.<sup>1</sup>

[ENCLOSURE.]<sup>2</sup>

AVIGNON, Sept. 24, 1868.

DEAR MR. . . . , — You ask me what I think of the controversy now going on in the United States respecting the rightfulness of paying off a portion of the national debt contracted in cash, in a depreciated paper currency, and of taxing, in violation of an express compact, the interest of the national bonds. It is painful, even to have to answer such a question. It is already a great calamity that two such proposals should have been inscribed in the electoral programme of a great political party, and not unanimously rejected even by its opponents. The success of either proposal would, in my estimation, be one of the heaviest blows that could be given to the reputation of popular governments, and to the morality and civilization of the human race.

This is one of those vital questions which send us back to the first principles of social existence, and compel us to ask ourselves what are the conditions which enable mankind to dwell together in nations and communities, to work together in joint undertakings, and exchange the privations of the savage for the blessings of civilized life. The very first and most essential of these conditions is, that

<sup>1</sup> "What you write to me of the disposition of the working classes is of the deepest interest, and authoritatively confirms some of the conclusions to which my very limited observation has been leading me. But there are two sources of danger in the present social condition of England to which you do not refer, and the importance of which, it is very possible, I may overestimate. One is the incr[easing] number of the unemployed and almost unemployable class — those who would work if they could find work to do; and those who would not work, even if work were abundant and wages fair. The other is the ignorance and hopelessness of the mass of agricultural and mining laborers. The vast number of the people of England who barely support existence, who have no opening or hope of improvement in the present condition of society, and have nothing to lose if nothing to gain by change in the established order, is a fact that weighs heavily on one who comes from a hopeful country. This mass of hopeless people, with ultimate dependence on the poor-rates as their best prospect, is no doubt very inert, very incapable of dangerous combination in quiet times. But when the discussion of such questions as those of property in land, of the limits of income, etc., once begins in earnest — and this discussion seems near at hand — they can hardly fail to be roused, and their excitement becomes dangerous in proportion to the ignorance and dulness of their minds.

"But I am glad to trust to your more cheerful views, and to believe that I am mistaken in feeling serious solicitude." *Extract from Mr. Norton's reply.*

<sup>2</sup> Printed in *The Nation*, October 15, 1868, as a "letter recently addressed by Mr. Mill to a private friend in England."



they should be able to trust one another's engagements. Even savage life could not be carried on unless the savages frequently helped one another: in civilized life every human being depends for comfort, for security, often for life itself, upon things done for him by other people. If he could not rely upon other people for doing what they undertake; if his experience taught him that a man who makes a promise, does so with the intention of only keeping the promise if it happens to be quite convenient; he would have to look to himself alone for all protection, and for the supply of all his wants. He would be below the condition of most savages. If we cannot trust each other's word (was the saying of an eminent man) we may as well go back to the woods.

But if there is one case more than another, in which it is indispensable that men should keep their promises — should do what they pledge themselves to do — it is the case of money contracts. All the complex fabric of our civilization rests upon the paying and receiving of money; every one's plans of life, and almost every one's assurance of living at all, are built upon the expectation of receiving, at the appointed time, the money or money's worth due to him from others. If any one buys a thing, and then does not pay for it; or sells a thing, and then does not deliver it; if any one hires services, and does not pay the wages agreed on, or receives wages, and does not perform the service; if any one borrows money or money's worth, and, though able, does not repay it at the time agreed on, or withholds the equivalent which he had bargained to give for its use; the defaulter not only proves himself a dishonourable and dishonest man, he not only inflicts an injury, which may be serious, which may be even irreparable, upon the individual who has trusted him, but he does what lies in him to dissolve and put an end to that trust in one another, without which there would be no exchange of commodities, no separation of employments, and no man would have any satisfaction for his wants, except what his own labour or craft could directly provide. The impossibility of carrying on human society, even in an almost rudimentary state, without holding men to the fulfilment of their engagements, has always been so obvious, that there is not a single known community, past or present, in which provision has not been made for enforcing those engagements, by laws and tribunals, supported either by a public force set apart for the purpose, or, in ruder societies, by the collective strength of the community.

Can any reason be given why the obligation of good faith, which holds between one man and another, is not equally binding between the entire community and any person who has trusted them? Is a promise made by the whole people through their authorized agents,

less sacred than a promise made by a private person, which also may have been made through his agents? Ought the fact, that there is a tribunal which can compel individuals to keep their contracts, and no tribunal which can coerce a nation — ought the fact, that the debt of a nation is a debt of honour — ought the fact, that a nation *can* be a swindler and a knave if it chooses — ought this to make any civilized people think that it can dispense in its own favour, with the duty which its own tribunals enforce against its citizens? Unless it be a sufficient license for committing a crime, that it can be committed without any immediate penalty except the disgrace, there is no other difference between the two cases but such as make the criminality greater, of a nation which robs its creditors, than of an individual, for, in the first place, a nation always *can* pay its creditors if it chooses; which cannot always be said of an individual. And in the next place, a breach of faith by a whole people involves everybody in the guilt, except such as with their whole heart and strength denounce and protest against it. It is an example of fraud displayed in the sight of mankind, and penetrating into every family in the country. It is a direct sanction of the like dishonesty to every citizen in his private transactions. Let any one be really persuaded that a whole people may break its word, and refuse to pay in full the money it has borrowed, is he likely to think that he himself is culpable for doing the same in his own private affairs, if he can manage to evade the legal punishment which is the only real distinction between the two cases?

The detractors of democratic government on this side of the Atlantic have been accustomed to say that however specious may be the arguments for it, in its actual working it would turn out to be a retrogradation towards barbarism. Until now, the example of the great American republic, notwithstanding the dishonourable conduct of several of the States (most — would that I could say always — among those which had been demoralized by slavery) has generally been deemed a practical refutation of these sinister prophecies. But the charge against democracy of being a return to barbarism would be made out, if its effect were to be the public repudiation of pecuniary engagements. It is a remarkable fact, that what the people of the United States are now urged to do with respect to the five-twenty bonds — urged by the programme of a political party (happily not by every member even of that party) bears an almost exact likeness to some of the most disgraceful misdeeds of the European despots in the middle ages. Read the history of the most profligate Kings of France, and other European countries, not excepting England, and see who were those whose conduct excited the greatest public indignation during their lives, and left the

deepest stain on their memory when dead. They were those who debased the coin. What was their motive for debasing it? To put off their creditors with the same nominal sum of money, but a less quantity of the precious metal. Even the despots were so conscious and so much afraid of the infamy of this fraud, that they generally endeavoured to commit it secretly and in silence. They made it a capital offence to betray the secret. Would they have been less guilty if they had impudently brazened it out? Living in a rude age, the only means at their disposal for committing the fraud was the coarse expedient of altering the coin. Their ingenuity had not reached the contrivance of putting forth pieces of paper which pretended to be money and were not, inducing people to take them by a promise printed on the paper to give for it on demand real money of the same nominal value, and then breaking that promise and issuing them in such numbers as to be only worth half the money which they purported to represent. But this roundabout way, and the direct way, have the self-same purpose: to get rid of debts, by paying, instead of what one has engaged to pay, what is called the same sum of money, but is really a much smaller sum. And this example, set by the despots of barbarous ages, the people of the United States, in the ninety-second year of their national freedom, are invited by many of their active politicians to imitate!

Observe, too, that none of the apologies, poor and weak as these are, which have been suggested to the nations of Europe by the same sort of bad advisers, have any applicability to the case of the United States. The Democracy of European countries have sometimes been told that they are not bound to pay their national debts, because the money was borrowed by Kings and aristocracies who did not represent the people, and was expended in keeping the people in subjection or in carrying on foreign wars which the people had not authorized. None of these lame excuses can be alleged by the American repudiators. The most audacious pleader for dishonesty cannot deny that the money was borrowed by a Congress and a President elected by, and fully responsible to, the people — borrowed for the service of the American republic in its utmost need, for a war which was emphatically a war of the people, and in which the stake involved was the preservation of their collective existence as a nation. The only persons in whose mouths any other doctrine can possibly be sincere, are the ex-rebels and their favourers. To all but them, it is impossible even to conceive a case in which the obligation to pay the debt, principal and interest, to the full extent of the contract, could be more binding.

A plea which imposes upon some people, who would shrink from anything which they themselves regarded as repudiation, is this:

Greenbacks, however they may be depreciated, are legal tender — are the lawful currency of the United States: other persons are obliged to receive this currency in payment of all their dues, and why should the public creditor be an exception? This seems to have been the argument which prevailed with the upright, but not always clear-sighted or discerning mind of the late Thaddeus Stevens. But the answers to it are manifold. The first is, that *almost* all persons except the public creditor have the remedy in their own hands. Those who have goods to sell, can and do demand a higher price; those who sell their services can and do require a higher remuneration. Even in loan transactions that are yet to come, the lenders know the chances they are exposed to — are aware that the medium they are to be paid in is of uncertain value, and can and will require a rate of interest sufficient in their estimation to cover their risks. To all these persons the uncertainty of the measure of value is a source of great inconvenience, but to none of them is it an injustice. Injustice *is* done to those who had lent their money, or had otherwise become entitled to fixed annual incomes, before specie payments were suspended. Among these are the old creditors of many of the States. All persons thus situated are grievously injured, by being paid their interest in depreciated greenbacks, and would be still further defrauded if the principal were repaid to them in a similar medium. But at least the nation collectively had incurred no obligation to these persons, beyond the general obligation of good government. It had not specifically pledged the national honour to them. Even the separate States never, I believe, pledged their faith to their creditors that they should not suffer this particular injury; however binding the obligation ought to have been felt, in honour and conscience. That pledge *has* been given to the creditors of the United States. I make no distinction between payment of the interest, and repayment of the principal. The bonds themselves, it is not denied, stipulate expressly that the interest shall be paid in cash, but are silent as to the principal. That the obligation, however, applied to principal as well as interest, was universally understood; was expressly declared by the authorized agents of the nation whenever the question was asked; was not then gainsaid by any of those who are now attempting to shake off the obligation, and was only not declared in express terms because nobody thought that such a declaration was necessary, or could add any strength to the pledge. In consequence of this understanding the loans were obtained at rates of interest very low under the circumstances; far lower than would otherwise have been possible. Governments which pay their creditors in inconvertible paper always borrow, if able to borrow at all, on much more onerous terms than

other governments. If those who lent their savings to the United States had been told at the time, that every thousand dollars they lent should be repaid to them in greenbacks which might then be worth not more than a thousand cents (the depreciation of the French assignats amounted to that and more) nobody, unless he could afford to make the nation a present of his money, would have parted with it unless at a rate of interest sufficient to insure him against this extreme risk. The United States obtained these great sums of money in their extreme necessity, at an interest (all things considered) not very much exceeding what the high value of capital in a new community compels them to pay in ordinary times; and after having reaped the benefit — having by that indispensable help, saved their national existence, they are now exhorted to withhold the price, at the cost of the national honour.

The same reasons of justice and good faith apply still more obviously to the condition, expressly stipulated by the lenders, that the interest on the bonds should not be subject to direct taxation. Some people imagine that the breach of this stipulation would not be robbery provided that the bonds are not taxed at a higher rate than other property. Now I find it stated as a known fact, that they are already subject to the same direct taxation as other property; that the income they yield is subject to income tax. But even if they were not, of what consequence would it be if exemption from all direct taxation were a condition of the contract? And exemption expressly stipulated for, is not an unjust advantage conceded to them over other people, whence for every advantage so obtained, value has been given by those who enjoy it, in the shape of a diminished interest. The only difference in respect of taxation between them and the rest of the public is, that they have paid down their taxes in advance, while other people wait for the visit of the tax-gatherer. To make them pay over again, under pretence that they had not already paid, would be one of the most flagrant forms of the iniquity of breaking a contract and keeping the pecuniary consideration received for it.

But there is little danger that these immoral counsels will prevail. It has been shewn by many examples in the recent history of the United States, that an agitation for something wrong and mischievous may go on for a certain length of time without visibly stirring up the good sense and honesty of the country to resist it; and many such agitations commence, culminate and decay, without disturbing public tranquillity, or leaving any permanent traces of their existence: but that when one of these agitations attains a sufficient height to begin to be dangerous, a mass of opinion which ordinarily remains quiescent rouses itself into activity, puts down

the wrong thing with a vigorous hand, and peremptorily demands the right thing instead. So, I doubt not, it will be with this pernicious and discreditable, but, as I firmly believe, chiefly factitious movement, set up by political adventurers for the chance of gaining the few stray votes which, in the present state of parties, might suffice to turn the balance of many an election.

I am, Dear Mr. [blank], very sincerely yours,

J. S. MILL.

AVIGNON, Oct. 4, 1868.

DEAR SIR, — I am truly glad that you are pleased with the letter, and that you think its publication will be of service. On the matter of fact as to the liability of the bonds to income tax, my original impression was what I now learn to be the correct one; but I found the contrary so positively stated in articles and letters in newspapers, that I supposed I had been mistaken, and altered my first draft accordingly. The rectification you have been so kind as to make will perfectly meet the case.

I should have been glad if your name could have appeared in the first line, but on that point your judgment and feelings must decide.

I have no uneasiness as to the future of England from the two points in its condition which you mention in your letter. Those "who would work if they could find work to do," will, I think, find their field of employment greatly widened by the rapid progress of industrial improvement, and such of them as the growth of the national wealth does not provide employment for, will be more and more taken off by emigration. "Those who would not work even if work were abundant and wages fair" are a comparatively limited class of the lowest of the population, and whatever they make it necessary to do in order to keep them in obedience to law will have the fullest support from the respectable working people. "The ignorance and hopelessness of the mass of the agricultural labourers" are in a fair way to be removed. The movement will soon be irresistible for a national education which will include them; and as soon as they have intelligence to know that better wages are to be had in the manufacturing towns, or in the United States or the Colonies, they will flock thither. Emigration, already so great an element in the social economy of Ireland, is only beginning to reach the agricultural districts of England. It will be the great safety valve, and will, I think, prevent the stir that is sure to take place in the minds of the agricultural labourers from having any other than a wholesome effect.

In the United States, ever since the North shook off the yoke of the South, the most favourable prophecies are always those which

are verified. Allow me to say with what pleasure and instruction, always increasing, I read the *North American Review*. The July number is perhaps the best I have yet read. I am, Dear Sir, yours very truly,

J. S. MILL.

BLACKHEATH PARK, KENT, NOV. 15, 1868.

DEAR SIR, — I received your letter when on the point of setting out for England on account of the elections; with which I have been fully occupied ever since. I regretted much to hear of your illness, from which I hope you have, long ere this, completely recovered.

We may congratulate ourselves and each other on the political prospect in both our countries. The election of Grant and Colfax will, to all appearance, be followed by the return to Parliament of a large majority to support a Gladstone government. Your anticipations have proved true as to Butler, but that is of very minor consequence.

I return to Avignon in a few days, and I fear I shall not be able within that time to pay my respects to you at Keston; but if you are passing anywhere near Blackheath and can find time to look in upon me, it would give me much pleasure to see and converse with you. I am, Dear Sir, yours very truly,

J. S. MILL.

AVIGNON, NOV. 28, 1868.

DEAR MR. NORTON, — If you do not leave England early in the spring, we may still have an opportunity of meeting, as, although I shall not hurry away from here as I have been obliged to do when in Parliament, while the weather is still wintry in England, I shall be at Blackheath, most likely, in the course of the month of March. My absence from the House of Commons is personally a very great relief to me, and therefore I have declined the invitations I have received to stand elsewhere. I accepted the invitation made to me three years ago, partly because of the reproach which has often been made against the literary men of America, that they would not enter into political life; a reproach however, which I do not think well founded. Moreover, there were at that time some points which I thought could be usefully brought before the public through the House of Commons. Nor were the relations of America and England so settled then as now. At present I am very glad to be free from parliamentary work, much of which is a great waste of time, more especially during the height of the violent party contest on such a point as the Irish Church, the final result of which does

not admit of a doubt, and yet which will cause a deplorable waste of time and energy. There are always periods of this sort in the practical working of politics, when those whose taste or talent lies rather in principles than in details can be of more use in literary than in political life.

I regret the defeat of the radical party throughout the country. It seems to have been owing to the want of organization on their side, and to the great expenditure of money on that of our opponents. It remains to be seen, and I cannot venture to predict, how far our friends will be discouraged by the result. Those with whom I am myself in communication seem to be stimulated rather to more efforts; but perhaps they may be the most energetic among us. It is in any case satisfactory to find that if these elections have been carried by money, there is at all events so much money on the moderate liberal side; since after all, as a question between Gladstone and Disraeli, Gladstone is triumphant. When we consider how slow the English mind is to move, we must look upon this as a success, and trust to the Press to prepare the way for more progress hereafter. I am, Dear Mr. Norton, very truly yours,

J. S. MILL.

AVIGNON, June 23, 1869.

DEAR MR. NORTON, — Few things could be more pleasant or more encouraging to me than such a letter as yours. It is a great satisfaction that you not only agree so completely with the little book,<sup>1</sup> but think so highly as you do of its probable influence. It is quite true that it was written principally with a view to the state of society and opinion in England; and even with respect to that, it bears traces of having been written, as it was, several years ago. I am aware that the circumstances of the United States are, for the reasons you give, decidedly more favourable than those of the old country. Accordingly, the movement commenced in America, and is much more advanced there than in England though it is advancing very rapidly in England too. It will probably be some time before a Committee of the House of Commons will recommend the admission of women to the parliamentary suffrage; but the repeal of the legal provision which excluded women from the municipal franchise, has just passed the House of Commons unopposed. The present session will also see (unless the Lords stop it) the right of married women to their own property and earnings acknowledged, and placed on the same footing in England as in most of the States of the Union. We live in times when broad principles of justice,

<sup>1</sup> *Subjection of Women.*



perseveringly proclaimed, end by carrying the world with them. Your great anti-slavery contest has done that much for mankind. How little did the contemporaries of the voyage of the *Mayflower* suspect what was to come of it!

America will probably also be the first to resolve the complicated question of marriage and divorce. It cannot be resolved until women have an equal voice in deciding it.

If we were going to stay here, we should not envy you even your magnificent view of the Lake and the Dent du Midi; but we are going back to England, though only for a few weeks. With our kind regards to Mrs. Norton, I am, Dear Mr. Norton, very truly yours,

J. S. MILL.

AVIGNON, June 26, 1870.

DEAR SIR, — I have had the pleasure of receiving your letter of June 17.

I agree, in the main, with all that you say respecting the limitation of the right of property even in moveable wealth. I never meant to say that this right should be altogether unlimited, nor to ascribe to it sacredness in any other sense than that all the necessary conditions of human happiness are sacred. I do not, indeed, quite agree with your friend Mr. Wright,<sup>1</sup> when, in the passage quoted and concurred in by you, he seems to say that, from the utilitarian point of view, the right of private ownership is founded *solely* on the motives it affords to the increase of public wealth; because independently of those motives, the feeling of security of possession and enjoyment, which could not (in the state of advancement mankind have yet reached) be had without private ownership, is of the very greatest importance as an element of human happiness. But this is probably a difference rather in expression than in opinion between us.

There is, however, this great practical difference between the case of moveable wealth, and that of land, that, so long as land is allowed to be private property (and I cannot regard its private appropriation as a permanent institution) society seems to me bound to provide that the proprietor shall only make such uses of it as shall not essentially interfere with its utility to the public: while, in the case of capital, and moveable property generally, though society has the same right, yet the interests of society would in general be better consulted by laws restrictive of the acquisition of too great masses of property, than by attempting to regulate its

<sup>1</sup> Chauncey Wright. See Norton-Howe, *Letters of Charles Eliot Norton*, i. 328.

use. I have, in my *Political Economy*, proposed limitations of the right of ownership, so far as the power of bequest is part of it, on the express ground of its being injurious to society that enormous fortunes should be possessed by gift or inheritance.

My daughter and I are greatly obliged to you and Mrs. Norton for your kind invitation. It would be a real pleasure to us both to avail ourselves of it. But we have been calculating lately whether we can afford to allow ourselves, this summer and autumn, a holiday of ten days or only one of four, and such are the calls on our time and the quantity of work we have to do that we have been compelled to decide for the shorter of the two.

The announcement that I was to be at a meeting in London on the 15th of this month was quite unauthorized. The request did not even reach me till after the meeting had taken place. We leave here in a few days, and shall be at Blackheath (where please direct) in the second week of July for the remainder of the summer.

The death of Dickens is indeed like a personal loss, even to those who knew him only by his writings. I am, Dear Sir, very truly yours,  
J. S. MILL.

Professor BASSETT communicates a copy of a letter found in a New England house about 1915. It was lent to Miss Margaret A. Milroy, of Houston, Texas, a student in Smith College, Northampton, who gave permission to copy.

ELKANAH LANE TO PRUDENCE LANE.<sup>1</sup>

PARKMAN [MAINE], January 26th, 1839.

DEAR SISTER, — It has been so long since I wrote that I shall be some troubled to frame a satisfactory excuse. I have been some time in this predicament, which I would give, as one reason, for my not having written before; and another which began to operate before this had much effect, was the loss of your letter, which I could not find, having searched repeatedly; and not being able to answer your Arguments on Abolition without it, I delayed writing in some hope that it might be found; and also through some fear, that I might be charged with making this excuse through inability to answer your arguments. And another reason I would give which had

<sup>1</sup> Conjectured to be children of Elkanah Lane of Swanzev, although the names in the latter part of the letter do not correspond to any available record. Elkanah, Jr., was born October 23, 1783, and married, in 1804, Sarah Foster. His mother's name was Esther ——. Prudence, born December 22, 1802, married, in 1842, Jonathan Eaton, of Westminster, Mass. Her mother's name was Annis Knight. Read, *History of Swanzev*, 390.

some bearing before the others and some with them, was the little time I had to devote to writing — particularly to write an argumentative letter. I felt even at the first a perfect willingness to attempt an answer to the arguments in your letter on Slavery, the most of which I considered as not having any bearing upon me. For I profess to have as much Sympathy for the poor Slave as Abolitionists and as much desire for their emancipation — and more for their emancipation from the chains of spiritual darkness. For Abolitionists are professedly opposed to the measures that have been adopted for their colonization and their being put in their own country under the influence of the Gospel. And the measures also they have taken have prevented in the Southern States in some measure the ministers of Christ from laboring among them, through fear, that they might excite in them a Spirit of hostility against their Masters.

The Abolitionists it is true have done some good, but I think I have reason to fear that they have done more evil. They have not been sparing of their censures upon those that have not fallen in with their views; and have manifested much asperity against their own brethren. In consequence of which in almost every Church in our country Brother is at war with Brother — uncharitableness, discord, and contention prevail. And what is gained? How many of the two hundred and fifty million slaves in our Country have been liberated? Through all the non-slave States they have had their agents travelling at considerable expense, holding Anti-Slavery Conventions, lecturing in almost every neighborhood where they could get any considerable number to hear them, circulating their Periodicals, Pamphlets, and Tracts. And what we may say has been effected thereby? Many Abolitionists have been made in these Northern States. But what bearing have all these efforts had upon Slaveholders? They have not attended their conventions, nor heard their lectures, and probably have read but few of their Publications. If any of these have fallen into their hands, have they not in general been more than calculated to irritate and inflame the mind than to convince of the evil of Slavery? Particularly those which have no foundation in truth, — such as the History of Williams, etc. If slaves are ever set free by their Masters, I think it must be from one of the following causes — 1st, Through the influence of Moral and Religious Principle; 2nd, Receiving for them an equivalence; 3rd, not being for their temporal interest to employ them as slaves; or 4th, being disgraceful to hold them. It will not perhaps be contended that they are more under the influence of the principles of the Gospel now than before the days of Abolitionism. But the fact is they are less so; of course will be less affected by those Principles. And as it respects the second cause, I have never heard of any being set free

by the Abolitionists by purchase. They prefer rather to appropriate their money to employ agents, etc., as before stated. In accordance with the third consideration, Abolitionists have endeavored to convince us, here to the North, that it would be more profitable for slaveholders to set free their Slaves, and then to hire them, than to have their labor gratis. Though this may be true, it would be very difficult, so fully, to make the Slaveholders believe it, as to change a certainty for an uncertainty. The Abolitionists as it regards the disgracefulness of slavery, have had no influence upon it. It cannot become disgraceful, until it is generally abandoned; and it will not be generally abandoned, until some other principle is brought to bear upon it. I must tell you I by no means approve of the rash measures which have been taken to put down Abolitionism. They are contrary to the letter and spirit of our National Institutions, and are to be condemned by all men of Principle, and by every lover of Civil and Religious Liberty. I am willing the subject of Slavery should be fully discussed, fairly and candidly, not only here among ourselves, but in our national Councils. But I do disapprove of some means made use of to produce excitement. I disapprove of the uncharitableness and censoriousness of many who boast so much of being the friends of the Slaves. I was at Mercer<sup>1</sup> last fall and found there was difficulty in the Congregational Church in consequence of Abolitionism. There were a number of Mr. Sykes' Church and Society who would not hear him preach because, as they said, he was in favor of slavery (or rather because he was not an Abolitionist). A distinguished man belonging to his society told me that he did not believe that any man who was in favor of Slavery (a common term for those who are not Abolitionists) or any slaveholder had one spark of Religion. I see daily its bad effects in our own Church which is perhaps more torn and distracted by it than any other; and I fear it will eventually end in a Schism. I should be reconciled to this, could the emancipation of the Slaves be effected; But I almost as much believe should there be Slaves in the Moon that the Abolition Measures, here adopted, would effect their emancipation, as they would the Emancipation of the Slaves of the Southern States. And I believe that some of the measures they are pursuing, and some of the principles adopted by many, are not in accordance with those of Christ and his Apostles. But I have said enough of this subject, more perhaps than you will have patience to read.

I would inform you that about a year ago I disposed of my farm in Foxcroft and last spring moved in with Elisha and Sarah where

<sup>1</sup> Somerset County, Maine.

we have been until the present time; but expect to move back to Foxcroft in about 2 months upon a farm I lately bought. God has done much for us as a family since I wrote. We had a very special outpouring of the Spirit of God in our neighborhood last winter in which we had reason to think that Wesley, Esther, Almira, and Edward shared. About twenty-five of the youth in the School I had taught for two winters before, we had reason to think were subjects of God's pardoning Mercy. The whole number probably who were subjects of the work were not less than eighty or ninety. But we have [our] sorrows as well as our joys. Elkanah a year ago last Spring went [off] and left his family and we have not to a certainty heard from him since. His conduct was bad previously to his going away. His wife has gone back with her children to her fathers. Samuel has bought the farm on which he lived. He has been in the neighborhood of Houlton near the British lines for upwards of a year. Wesley has bought with me. He is now at Sebec engaged for a year. Esther is at Mercer at her Brother Baker's who came down the other day and carried her up. Almira and Edward are with us. We have anxiously desired to hear from you, of your health, enjoyment, and prosperity: and that of Mother's. We wish also to hear from all our friends; to all of whom we all would wish to be remembered. I hope this letter will find you not only in health of body but in Spiritual Health, living to the glory of God and the best interest of the soul. And I hope that Mother, as she feels the infirmities of old age coming on will seriously reflect on the shortness of time, the few days she has to continue here and apply her heart to wisdom, being careful as the outward man decays to have the inward man daily renewed. I hope she will be patient to suffer and willing to do whatever God's will requires, implicitly relying on the Divine Promise that all things shall work together for good to them that love him. Remembering at the same time that it is through much tribulation that we are to enter into the Kingdom of God. Perhaps we may never all meet here again; if not I hope we may be prepared to meet in Heaven — the joy of which meeting, I sometimes anticipate and for which I hope we shall all labor, which is the prayer of your affectionate and unworthy Brother,

E. LANE.

P. S. If I have hurt your feelings by not writing before, I hope you will forgive me. I own I have been faulty; but I hope the reasons I have assigned may be with you some extenuation of my guilt. It has been more difficult for me to write the past season, than usual my time not being my own. I hope you will not do as I have done, but write immediately. I teach in Atkinson the present

winter. I have finished one school and expect to commence another of two months next Thursday. Yours, etc.,

E. LANE.

Remarks were made during the meeting by Messrs. THAYER and W. R. LIVERMORE.

To

THE Court of Sessions have appointed Thursday and Friday the third and fourth Day of *August* next, to grant Licences on Spiritous Liquors : You are hereby notified to Attend accordingly, as there will be no other Day allowed for that Purpose.

*Boston, July 17. 1769.*

# MEMOIR

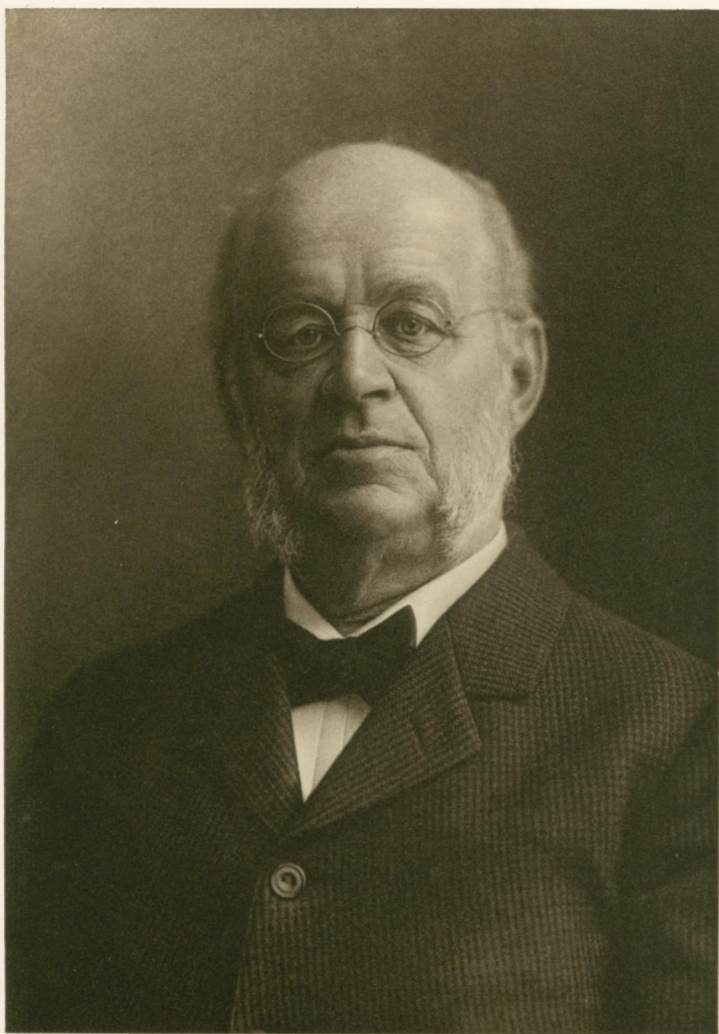
OF

## GEORGE HARRIS MONROE.

By EDWARD STANWOOD.

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GEORGE HARRIS MONROE was of the sixth generation from William Munroe, who was born in Scotland in 1625, and arrived in America in 1652. It is supposed — from the fact that on his arrival he was sold as an apprentice — that he was one of the prisoners of war taken by Cromwell. The custom was that such prisoners were sold in England to shippers, who brought them to America and sold them into service for a term of from three to ten years. At all events, Cromwell was victorious in the battle of Worcester in 1651; and in the same year a cargo of prisoners, four of whom bore the name of Munrow, was consigned to Thomas Kemble of Boston. It is believed that William was one of the four, although the name on the list that may have been his was obliterated. The tradition is that he was bound out to a farmer named Winship, who lived in that part of Cambridge which is now Arlington. By 1657 he was evidently free, for in that year he was fined in Cambridge for not having rings in the noses of his swine. The penalty was imposed upon him in the name of Row, which was used indifferently with Munrow in those times when surnames were not definitely fixed, and were spelled variously. He settled at Cambridge Farms, as the territory that now forms Lexington was then known, about the year 1660, was married three times, and reared a family of seven sons and six daughters. The tribe increased amazingly. Marrett Munroe, the great grandfather of the subject of this memoir, was the youngest of seven children, and mentioned eight of his own children in his will. One of those children, Nathan, the grand-



MHS

Gen. H. Monroe



father of George, was a member of Parker's company, and participated in the battle of Lexington. There were no less than eleven Munroes in that affair on Lexington Common, beside a twelfth in the Danvers company, but they were all no nearer to Nathan or to one another than third or fourth cousins. Nathan was the father of nine children, of whom Harris, the father of our late associate, was the youngest.

George was born at Dedham, where his father died in 1834, on August 28, 1826. When Harris Munroe moved to Dedham James Monroe was President of the United States, and as the Lexington family was otherwise unrepresented in the neighborhood, it was a natural thing for the townspeople to adopt, and for Harris Munroe to acquiesce in, the change in the spelling of his name to conform to that of the President. A year after his death the family removed to Wrentham, where George received his preliminary schooling at Day's Academy. Even at the early age of ten years he began to show the bent of his mind, for he was always reading whatever he could lay his hands upon. There was a small library at the academy, and he read every book in it.

A more thorough education, but not that of the schools, began when, at the age of sixteen, he came to Boston and learned the printer's trade in the office of Samuel N. Dickinson.

Like many another conspicuous light in journalism, born to poverty and having from teachers but the rudiments of an education, he learned, and learned to love, literature and public affairs, while putting into type at the printer's case the written words of others. Soon his knowledge was broadened by the duty to which he was assigned as a proof-reader. That occupation may easily turn a young man into a pedant, a literary prig, whose eyes seek out minor and unimportant defects in typography and diction, and overlook greater faults, and fail to appreciate beauty of style and power in the argument of that which he reads. Young Monroe was not a proof-reader of that sort. He learned to distinguish between good and bad writing, between sound and unsound reasoning. For that he had the best of opportunities, for he transferred his services to the University Press at Cambridge, where, until the year 1859, his occupation required him to become familiar with much that was good as well as new in literature, and with some to

which that description does not apply. Among other books with which he then became acquainted before they reached the reading public were some of the tales of Nathaniel Hawthorne, who was then in the period of his greatest and best productivity, and Mrs. Stowe's *Dred*. He also had the opportunity to absorb the eschatology of the Millerites, who issued from the University Press books and pamphlets proving the imminent doom of the earth and the beginning of the millennium.

Meantime, as early as 1849, when he was only twenty-three years of age, he had a short engagement as an editorial writer for the *Lawrence Courier*. Apparently he undertook no other original literary work for several years, but in 1857 he began writing Boston letters for the *Dedham Gazette*, some of which, at least, he wrote in the office of the *Gazette*, for he then lived in Dedham. In 1859 he bought the *Norfolk County Journal*, which was published at Roxbury, to which city he removed as soon as he was sure that his enterprise was to be successful. In the *Journal* office he was sole proprietor, sole publisher, sole editor, sole reporter, and sole proof-reader. Notwithstanding the nearness of Roxbury to Boston, and the fact that the *Journal* was a weekly, he quickly attracted attention to his paper by the ability with which he conducted it, and its success continued even after the annexation of Roxbury to Boston, at the beginning of 1868, when he changed the name of the paper to *Suffolk County Journal*.

A most important result of the attention which he attracted in political and journalistic quarters was the invitation he received in 1866 to send weekly letters to the *Hartford Courant*. The editor of that paper first applied for the service to Mr. William S. Robinson, whose "Warrington" letters to the *Springfield Republican* were eagerly read in political circles. Mr. Robinson, not feeling able or willing to divide his allegiance, suggested Mr. Monroe, who accepted the duty, and then began to write the "Templeton" letters which he continued to furnish every week until within a year or two of his death, a period of about thirty-five years. His engagement with the *Courant* was terminated even then only because he accepted an offer to transfer his services to the *New York Herald*.

After disposing of his interest in the Roxbury weekly he was for some time connected with Mr. Slack's *Commonwealth* as an

editorial writer; and then became editor for a few years of the *Saturday Evening Gazette*, which was practically a Sunday newspaper, before the days of the huge Sunday issues of the dailies. When the *Gazette* languished he sought employment as an occasional contributor to the Boston *Herald*. Mr. Holmes, the editor, quickly recognized the value of Monroe's services and made him a permanent member of the editorial staff. From that time, for a period of about thirty years, he retained the position. His connection with the *Herald* ended only with his death, on October 15, 1903. During all that time, notwithstanding more than one change in the management of the paper, he was the recognized leader writer on all important political questions.

It would not be easy to exaggerate the importance of the service which Mr. Monroe rendered to the community. To be sure, his influence was not exerted upon the thought of a very wide circle. None of the papers to which he contributed had much more than a local circulation. But in Boston and in New England the influence was great, although not one in a thousand of those who read what he wrote knew his name or was aware of his existence. A keen observer and a friend of many prominent men, he was able in his letters in the *Courant* to throw light on every changing phase of state and municipal politics. A close student of public affairs and of political principles and history, and gifted with an acute mind and a ready pen, his work as an editorial writer did much to mould the opinion of the community. Although he was a man of unusually independent views on public questions, and of absolute courage in expressing them, he was always courteous in controversy, and never stooped to the use of pettifogging argument.

It is an indispensable qualification of a member of the staff of a daily newspaper that he shall be able to produce much "copy" every day. Of course he must be versatile, and must be able to write clearly and well, but he must surely be able to write a great deal. Mr. Monroe had all those qualifications. This Society has ample evidence of his productiveness, for his family has given to us more than a hundred scrapbooks in which are carefully pasted his letters to the *Courant* during more than three decades, and thousands of his editorial articles in

the *Herald*, besides a full set of the *Norfolk County Journal*, which he "edited" by writing practically all its original matter. Those scrapbooks will become exceedingly valuable material for history, hereafter. Little or nothing that it is worth while to remember regarding public and social events — not society events, in the newspaper sense — in the history of Massachusetts during the last quarter of the nineteenth century will be lacking to the student of those letters and articles.

Mr. Monroe possessed one qualification which most employing editors probably regard as a disqualification. He wrote a most unreadable hand. No compositor unfamiliar with it could decipher it and put his "copy" in type. A contest in cacography between Greeley, Murat Halsted and Monroe might be decided in favor of any one of the three. But the possession of the gift was a security to Monroe against the amendment of his work. It was theoretically the practice of Mr. Holmes, his editor, to read the editorials of the leader writers; but he could not read Monroe's manuscript. There were occasionally clashes of opinion between him and another member of the staff, whose field was separated from his own by a rather uncertain boundary line, and as they sometimes touched upon the same subject in the same issue, the contradiction between two articles on the same page gave opportunity for some of the "esteemed contemporaries" of the *Herald* to jeer sarcastically at the two vanes which surmounted the *Herald* building, as pointing in opposite directions. Mr. Monroe was very tenacious of his privilege of saying what he thought, and impatient of direction or correction by anybody. So it would not have distressed him greatly if he had caught Holmes, as did one member of the staff, trying to read his manuscript upside down.

Nothing has been said as yet of his political activities, but he was for some years in public life, and all his life he was a politician in the best sense of the word. First a Whig, he became a Republican early in the history of the party, and was particularly proud of one incident in his life when he resided in Dedham, when he acted as conductor of Abraham Lincoln, who had not then attained great national prominence, from Boston to Dedham, where he was to make a speech. But during the Grant administration he became a "Liberal Republican," and a supporter of Greeley in the campaign of 1872; and thereafter he

was a typical Massachusetts independent. Of course he was a "mugwump," and if, later, he might have called himself a Republican, he was one who usually voted against the candidates of the party. All that does not mean a career of political inconsistency and indecision, but a condition of impatience with the conduct of all parties, and an independence of mind that led him to support that party which, for the moment, seemed to him less deserving of defeat than the other. He accepted an election to the state senate of 1870 at the hands of his Roxbury Republican neighbors, but was not a good party man even in the legislature, and was as frequently found kicking over the traces as walking quietly in harness. Afterward, when the independents of the state were in full revolt against the Republican administration, he became the opposition candidate for Secretary of State, but of course was not elected.

With all his political acumen he was singularly guileless, not to say credulous, when shrewd politicians in whom he had confidence undertook to use him for their purposes. One example — for which I have the authority of the chief of the intrigue — will illustrate his amiable weakness. Twenty-five or thirty years ago, when Boston was politically divided more evenly than it is now, one party or the other, sometimes both, resorted to the transparent device of a "citizens' ticket" for a municipal election, to draw support from the opposing party. The manager of the "citizens" campaign for a certain Democratic candidate for mayor, himself a Democrat of the strictest sect, who confesses that he "hired the hall in which the 'independent citizens' assembled, designated the chairman who was to preside, appointed the committees and ran the convention generally," not only secured the services of Mr. Monroe as presiding officer, but coached him in his duties; and he reports that "he always conformed to my suggestions without ever dreaming that he was a cat's-paw for the wicked Democrats." Four campaigns, in four successive years, resulted in the election of that particular citizens' candidate. The bolters never asked nor received any reward for their help. "The proud consciousness of having beaten their own side was sufficient compensation for them."

Personally Mr. Monroe was kindly, suave and dignified, and

helpful to his younger associates. He had few intimates, but a host of men regarded him as a friend. The most of his leisure he passed at his own fireside, for he belonged to no clubs and attended few public functions. He was very methodical in his working habits, always arriving at the office at the same hour, and having turned off his daily production of about two columns of the *Herald*, he left the office and returned to his home, which was in Brookline during his later years.

He had two passions outside the work which gave him his livelihood. He was an omnivorous reader. He was particularly devoted to fiction, and read almost every new novel as it appeared. But he also devoured everything in the shape of political history and political and social discussion. If he had not been a leader writer on public questions he would have been a most competent reviewer of current literature.

His diversion was baseball. For many years he was a constant,—it would be nearer the truth to say a regular—attendant at every game of professional baseball in Boston. He had his own reserved seat in the grand stand, marked with his name. He knew the capacity and achievements of every prominent player, local or visiting, as he knew the character and ability of the statesmen whom he criticised as a writer.

Mr. Monroe married Alice M., daughter of Dr. William Ingalls, of Boston, October 25, 1853. He was therefore within ten days of reaching the fiftieth anniversary of his wedding at the time of his death. His widow and all five of their children—four sons and a daughter—still survive at the time of this writing, September, 1916.

He was chosen a member of this Society at the April meeting in 1898, and although, during the five years of his membership, he was usually present at the monthly meetings, he did not contribute any paper to our proceedings, and served upon no committees. He was, indeed, in no sense a historian; but the mass of material, the product of his pen, which now forms a part of our collections, will be history for coming generations. In effect it is a complete political diary of the second half of the nineteenth century.